

To the right Honourable the chosen and
Representative body of England Assembled
in Parliament.

The humble Petition of L. C. JOHN LILBURNE
A Free man of England.

Sheweth,
That your petitioner hath and doth look upon this Honourable House, as the
chosen and entrusted Commissioners of all the Commons of England, in whom
alone (by right) resides the formall and legall supreme power of England,
and unto whom all the Commons of England have given so much of their Power,
as to enable you alone, to doe all things whatsoever for their weale, safety peace and
prosperity, the end of all Government, as is most excellently by your Honourable
declaration of the 17. of April last declared.

The knowledge and understanding of which, hath made your petitioner as a Com-
moner (in his Countries straits and necessities) to take up armes as his duty, to
fight against the King (the servant of the Common wealth) and all the forces rais-
ed by his Authority, who sought to destroy the end of Government, the safety and
weale of the people, and to be faithfull in your said service, in the midst of
many deaths, contumning and fighting, the large profits of the Kings Honour
and preferments, sent unto him by foure Lords, when he was a prisoner for you as
a *Swiss*, for which he was immediately laid in Irons night and day, locked up close in
a room, a Centinell set at his dore, that so he might not speak with any whosoever,
forced to lye on the floore, kept without one farthing of allowance although he car-
ried not one penny with him to the prison.

And within a few daies after was (for his continued resolution) arraigned (in
Irons) as a Traitor for his life before Judge *Heath*, before whom he pleaded to his
indictment, protesting unto him at the open barre (when he pressed your petitioner
to save himselfe) that he your supplicante was not seduced by any to take up armes, but
did it out of a principle of duty to himselfe, his country and the Parliament, and
that he was resolved to spend his blood in the defence of his owne and his Coun-
tries Liberties, alfo your petitioner upon the same grounds hath often been in the
like since, and done good services, and hath continued faithfull in all his engagements,
and is resolved (by the strength of God) so to doe to the death.

Now forasmuch as the liberties and freedom contained in the 28. & 29. chap.
of the great Charter of England, are the best legall inheritance that your petitioner
hath, and for the preservation of which, yett have so often sworn to spend your lives
and fortunes, and inspired the people that trusted you to doe the same, and for the
attaining of which, your petitioner hath run the hazard of so many deaths and
injuries as he hath done, amongst which liberties and priviledges this is not one of

the least (as your petitioner humbly conceives) that all Commoners whatsoever in criminal causes shall be tried by their equals or fellow Commoners; nevertheless the House of Lords (commonly so called) summoned your petitioner to their Barre to answer a criminal charge there, contrary to the repository of the great Charter so often confirmed, and although your petitioner told their Messengers, and afterwards some of themselves, that by *Magna Charta* they had nothing to do with your petitioner in such a case, and that if he were called, he must and would plead this at their Barre, cost it him what it would, and also intreated one of themselves, to acquaint the rest of his fellow Lords, that he must and would protest against them, and appeale to his competent, proper, and legall tryers and judges your Honours.

Yet notwithstanding they forced your Petitioner to their Bar, and would have compelled him, contrary to Law, reason, and Conscience, and to the fundamentall liberty of all the free People of England, (so adjudged in his own case of the Star-chamber &c. by your honours and themselves) to answer to Interrogatories concerning himselfe, without shewing him any formall and legall charge in writing, although he earnestly desired to see it, if they had any, which was refused, and your Petitioner pressed again, and again with much vehemency, by their Speaker, to answer verbal questions, which forced your Petitioner to deliver at their open Bar his Protestation, in writing under his hand and seale, as also his appeal to your Honours, his competent, proper and legall Tryers and Judges, a true Coppy of which is hereunto annexed, (for which alone, they committed your Petitioner to Newgate prison, (as appears by the Coppy of their commitment hereunto annexed) all which your Petitioner humbly conceives, tends to the disfranchizing him of his just liberties and freedoms, (and so to the making him a slave) and to the violation of their own Oubes and Covenants, and to the utter subversion, and alteration, of the fundamentall Lawes, and governments of this Kingdome, for the preservation of which, so much blood and treasure hath already been spent.

Your Petitioner therefore, as a free man of England, (whose knowledge never did any act that deserveth the forfeiting of his birth-right) humbly appealeth to your honourable Bar and Justice, as his proper, competent, legall tryers and Judges, and humbly prayeth.

For as much as he is a free Commoner of England, and ought not to be proceeded against, nor his liberties and freedoms to be taken from him, in any arbitrary or extrajudicial way, And for that their Lordships have no power, nor jurisdiction, according to the Law and constitutions of this Kingdome, to try and adjudge any free Commoners thereof, for any criminal causes whatsoever, concerning life, limb, liberty, or estate, And for that your Petitioner is imprisoned, contrary to the form and tenour of the great Charter of England, and therefore altogether illegall, and nearly arbitrary; That your Honours will be pleased, according to your unpareld Declaration of the 7th of April last, whereby is set forth, that you will not exercise, nor suffer to be exercised by any other, any arbitrary power, but that you will provide for the safety and weal of the People, (the primitive end of all government) according to the great trust reposed in you, and committed to you, by your Im. powers, the Commons of England, you will take your Petitioner into your protection, and not suffer him any longer to be kept in prison, and spoiled of his Franchizes and liberties, but

restoring to the said Charter of liberties, your Petitioners Oaths and Declarations, the laws and Statutes of this Kingdom, be may freely be enlarged out of prison, and restored to his just liberties, with just reparations for his damages, for the great wrongs done unto him by his reproachfull imprisonment in the infamous prison of Newgate, and the indignation and frowning of the whole Kingdom (according to their long and just expectation) from the like usurpation, and encroachments of their just rights and privileges, and your Petitioner shall ever be ready to spend his life for you, and his Countryes just liberties, and to obedience to all just authority, to answer any Charge, when the same shall be in a legall way brought against him.

And your Petitioner (as in duty bound) shal ever pray to God, to enable you so soon to finish and perfect the great things expected from you, according as he hath promised in you.

Newgate, June 16.
1646.

JOHN LILBVRNE.

A Postscript, containing a generall Proposition.

GOD, the absolute Sovereign Lord and King, of all things in heaven and earth, the originall fountaine, and cause of all causes, who is circumscribed, governed, and limited by no faults, but doth all things merely and onely by his loversaion will, and unlimited good pleasure, who made the world, and all things therein, for his own glory, and who by his own will and pleasure, gave man (his mee creature) the soveraigny (under himselfe) over all the rest of his Creatures, Gen. 1. 26, 29. and indued him with a ratioll soule, or understanding, and thereby created him after his own image, Gen. 1. 26. 47. and 9. 6. the first of which was Adam, a male, or man, made out of the dust of clay, out of whose side was taken a Rib, which by the soveraign and absolute mighty creating power of God, was made a female, or Woman called Eve, which two are the earthly, original fountains, or begetters and bringers forth of all and every particular and individuall man and woman, that ever breathed in the world since, who are, and were by nature all equal and alike in power, dignity, authority, and majesty, none of them having (by nature) any authority, domination or majesteriall power, one over or above another, neither have they, or can they exercise any, but merely by institution, or donation, that is to say, by mutual agreement or consent, given, derived, or assumed, by mutuall consent and agreement, for the good benefit and comfort each of other, and not for the mischief, hurt, or damage of any, if being unnaturall, irrationall, fittill, wicked and unjust, for any man, or men whatsoever, to part with so much of their power, as shall enable any of their Parliament men, Commissioners, Trustees, deputies, Viceroys, Ministers, Officers or servants, to destroy and undoe them therewith: And unnaturall, irrationall, fittill, wicked, unjust, dishonest, and tyrannicall it is for any man whatsoever, spirituall or temporall, Clergy-man or Lay-man, to appropriate and assume unto himselfe, a power, authority and jurisdiction, to rule, govern or reign over any sort of men in the world.

world, without their free confent, and what were they, without God's leave, to do
 any other what so ever, do thereby as much as in them lies, endeavour to apprehend
 all unto themselves the Office and Sovereignty of God; (who alone doth, and dispo-
 seth by his will and pleasure) and to be like their Creator, which was the sinne of the
 Devils, who not being content with their first station, but would be like God, for
 which sin they were thrown down into hell, reserved in everlasting chains under
 darkness, unto the judgement of the great day. And thus in this war,
 which I thought the curse upon him and all his posterity, that he was not content with
 the station and condition that God created him in; but did aspire unto a better, and
 more excellent, (namely to be like his Creator) which proved his ruin, yea, and indeed
 had been the everlasting ruin and destruction of him and all his, had not God been
 the more mercifull unto him in the promised Messiah. Gen. Chap. 3.

From my back-lost in the Press, and Newgate.
 June 19. 1646.
 per me John Lilburne.

Curteous Countrymen to fill up this vacant place I shall desire thee to reade
 the words of the Declaration of the House of Commons, published 27. Ianu. 1641,
 which you shall find in the 42. pag. of the booke of Declarations thus
 And this House doth further declare, That all such persons as have given any Council,
 or endeavour to cause or maintain division or dissent, betweene the King and Parliament
 or betweene their houses, or otherwise entered into any combination or agreement, to be
 ayding, or assisting, to any such counsell or endeavour or have perswaded any in so doing,
 or that shall do any the things above went touch, And shall not forthwith discover the same
 to either House of Parliament: or the Speaker of either of the said Houses severally,
 shall be deemed an avowed and declared Publicke Enemy of the State and State of this Kingdome,
 and shall be inquired of, and proceeded against accordingly.
 Secondly the three Votes of both Houses May 10. 1642. which you shall find in
 the booke of Declarations pa. 270.

Resolved upon the Question

That it appears, That the King (advised by wicked Counsell) intends to make
 warre against the Parliament, and (in all their consultations and actions) have pro-
 ceeded on other and unto themselves, but the duty of His Kingdom, and the performance of all
 duty and loyalty to His Person.

Resolved upon the Question.

That whensoever the King makes warre upon the Parliament, it is a breach of the
 oath of fealty by him by his people, contrary to His Oath, and tending to the dissolution
 of this Government.

Resolved upon the Question

That who so ever shall serve, or assist Him in such warres, are traitors, by the Fun-
 damentall Lawes of this Kingdom, and have beene so adjudged by three Acts of Parlia-
 ment, and ought to suffer as Traitors. 11. Rich. 1. 1. Hen. 4.

John Browne Cler. Parliament.

The Declaration of both Houses in pa. 176. in these words, Whereas the King
 hath in this Declaration for the radiation of Ferdinando Lord Fairfax
 in you shall find pa. 914. in these words, The said Lord etc.



*of y^e Godd dogd breffle who by my self
 to flow of witte helpes can I yett have sayd*

